



Cavalleria Rusticana closes Donnafugata's Verga summer

Posted on October 30, 2026 by Edward Whitmore

RAGUSA, Sicily — [Dreamworld Pictures](#), the Sicilian company that stages Giovanni Verga's stories in the places that inspired them, has closed its summer season with a grand finale and will launch a new winter season. No dates have been announced yet.

The finale was Pietro Mascagni's 1890 opera *Cavalleria rusticana*, performed on Sunday, October 11, 2026, by more than 80 singers, musicians, and chorus members at the Castello di Donnafugata, a 19th century noble residence outside Ragusa.

"Staging *Cavalleria Rusticana* at Donnafugata was a historic moment for the castle," [Lorenzo Muscoso](#), who directed the production, told Italy Now. "The place became an integral part of the story, without artificial frames, letting stone, light, and space amplify the dramatic tension."

He spread the action from the park's Coffee House along its paths, with the audience following the drama up close. Umberto Terranova conducted the Orchestra Vincenzo Bellini and the Concentus Choir, with Sonia Fortunato as Santuzza, the abandoned lover, and Alberto Profeta as Turiddu, the young soldier killed in a duel.



Cavalleria Rusticana (*Credits: Muscoso*)

Verga's village

[Cunziria](#) is an old tanners' hamlet outside Vizzini, in the province of Catania, where Verga set that duel in his story *Cavalleria rusticana*. Mascagni later turned the tale of jealousy and honor into his breakthrough opera.

The hamlet lay abandoned for years. The first [Festival Verghiano](#), in 2014, helped bring it back to life, [LiveUniversity Catania](#) reported, and [Dreamworld](#) has since led its recovery as a place for theater, film, and music.

Muscoso, a director and producer from Vizzini, Verga's hometown, has curated the [festival](#) for about a decade. He has taken Verga's stories to [Matera](#), in Basilicata, and the [festival](#) names Malta's Teatru Manoel as its next stop abroad.

"Seeing hundreds of people crowd the castle in autumn, many of them foreigners from Malta, England, Germany, Poland, and France, was extraordinary," Muscoso said. The summer season drew about 2,000 people in all, according to the organizers.



Cavalleria Rusticana (*Credits: Muscoso*)

The [city of Ragusa](#) bought the castle in 1982 after years of neglect and restored it for visitors. The production was backed by the city, the Sicilian Regional Assembly, and a Catania agency of the insurer Generali, [La Sicilia](#) reported. Tickets cost €20.

Verga grouped his later novels under the title of the defeated, people crushed by poverty and fate. The village where he set his most famous tragedy has, for now, ended up on the winning side.

Source: <https://italynow.co.uk/cavalleria-rusticana-closes-donnafugatas-verga-summer/>